CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY NETWORK'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

JAN - FEB VGP WILL BE A COMBINED ISSUE

VALLEY GAY PRESS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY PENNSYLVANIA DIVERSITY NETWORK

SINCE 1998 - THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY OPINION & NEWS PAPER

VOL. 8 NO. 10 DECEMBER 2005

MUHLENBERG STUDENT EFFORT ADDS GENDER IDENTITY TO NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY - SEE PAGE 2

MCC CHRISTMAS DANCE

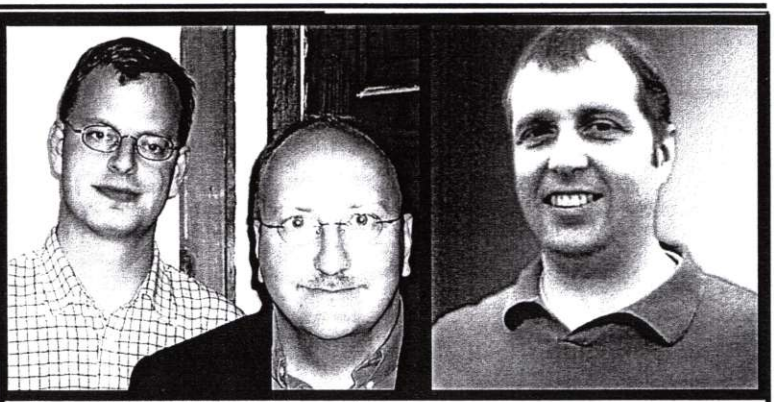
DEC. 17, 7 P.M. AT THE CHURCH
ENJOY A GLBTA DANCE IN A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT!

GLBT Infoline

Greater Lehigh Valley

610-HELP-123

(610-435-7123)



ED PAWLOWSKI (at right) was elected Mayor of Allentown by a landslide, winning every precinct in the city. Pawlowski is shown here with GLBT activist and campaign staff member **ROB HOPKINS.**

Openly gay candidate and PA-GALA Political Director **STEVE BLACK,** was elected Pen Argyl Borough Tax Collector

DEMOCRATS SWEEP MOST ELECTIONS ACROSS THE VALLEY

READ MORE ELECTION NEWS ON PAGE 2 & 5

GLORA ANNIVERSARY DINNER

DEC. 17 AT THE KUTZTOWN TAVERN.

$20 (must be paid in advance) includes dinner buffet, beverages, prizes and dancing. Contact GLORA@dejazzed.com for more information.

Doors Open at 5pm • $60pp • Cash Bar • Silent Auction

19th Annual **Snow Ball**

Presented by FACT

Fighting AIDS Continuously Together

Sunday, Dec. 4th

Back by popular demand: Off Center

www.factlv.org

Crown Plaza • 9th & Hamilton, Allentown • (610)360-6523

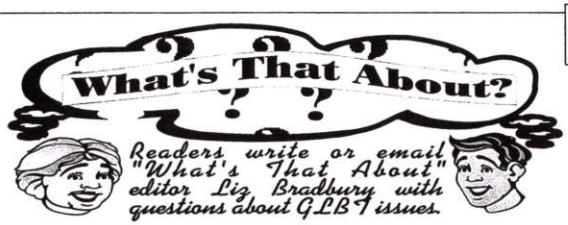
MCC

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY GLBTA COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Christmas Eve Service, December 24, 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Morning Service December 25, 10:30 a.m.
(Followed by a potluck Christmas Dinner.)

Christmas Evening Service December 25, 6:00 p.m.



Dear WTA: What happened in the elections?

Good Question - read about local elections on page 5.
Nationally, except for the passage of a Texas State Constitutional amendment to ban recognition of same-sex relationships, we did well in the election.

Maine voters rejected a referendum to overturn theie State anti-discrimination law. Maine had passed civil rights laws that protected people based on sexual orientation in employment twice in the past, but each time the law was overturned by popular vote referendum, this time however, the referendum failed and the law stayed in place..

Two closely watched Governor races - Virginia and New Jersey - went resoundingly to the Democrats when earlier polls had indicated very close races.

Every one of California Governor Arnold Swartzneggar's costly special election referendums were soundly defeated, indicating profound dissatisfaction with the Terminator. Yes, he was the guy who vetoed California same-sex marriage.

And most interestingly, in the PA town of Dover, the place where a (monkey style) trial over "intelligent design" could force religion into public school classrooms, eight seats on the nine seat school board were up for election. The incumbents, who all supported "intelligent design," were overwhelmingly defeated by a team of candidates who ran specifically on a platform against creationism in schools. The common sense results of this election caused (anti-gay) far right spokesman Pat Robertson to suggest that the people of Dover could no longer count on God to protect them from natural disaster.

It's odd that those pressing the concept of intelligent design insist that it really has nothing to do with religion, but immediately call religion into play by suggesting that God backs their curriculum and that those who oppose it are atheists. If it looks like a duck...

VALLEY GAY PRESS

WEB SITE: WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG
Publisher, Managing Editor --Liz Bradbury
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Columnists: Liz Bradbury, Patricia Sullivan, Denise McKelvey Ruby Zebu, Donnie and Earl Snyder, Stephen Libby, Scott Laubner

Valley Gay Press - The Lehigh Valley's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Community Opinion and Newspaper (VGP)operates as part of **Pennsylvania Diversity Network** VGP owns the copyright to its articles and columns. No part may be reproduced without written permission of the Publisher VGP offers free copies for direct mail and hand-out distribution to Lehigh Valley area not-for-profit organizations and businesses.The opinions expressed by columnists are their own and should not be attributed to this paper

Organizations that have VGPs for hand-out distribution:
Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley
1901 S. 12th Street, Allentown 610-709-8800
PFLAG Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
Allentown, 610.967.5219 HTTP://wwweastern-papflag.org/
Pride House at Muhlenberg College, Allentown
19th Street Theater-- 527 N 19th St. Allentown
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley (UUCLV)
-- 424 Center St., Bethlehem
Haven GLBTA Youth Group at UUCLV

To Contact Valley Gay Press:
Mail to:PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 Phone: 610-432-5449
Email: info@padiversity.org To arrange for your group or organization to receive copies to distribute, contact VGP Some restrictions apply.

RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

Denise is on vacation this month, but she'll be back in the next issue with more about your financial health.

MUHLENBERG POLICY UPDATED

By Adrian Shanker--
Valley Gay Press Freelance Guest Columnist

There has been a recent victory for queer rights at Muhlenberg College. A student initiated effort to encourage the school to amend the wording in its anti-discrimination policy has been accepted by the college. The new wording will explicitly protect students on the basis of gender identity. This policy change is not to assert in any way that the college was actively discriminating or even allowing discrimination based on a person's gender identity. The changes are rather an explicit statement that affirms Muhlenberg College as a welcoming community and a safe space for all. I submitted a request to the college President in mid-September and only six weeks went by before the changes would be official.

In addition, there is a special significance for changing the policy this year. Muhlenberg's Center for Ethics has a year-long theme surrounding the "Ethics and Politics of Identity." Among the many guest lecturers was Kate Bornstein, a person self-identified as neither gender, who spoke on the necessity to create more acceptance towards transgender politics and awareness.

The non-discrimination policy will now specifically include the words "gender identity" everywhere it appears on campus, from student and employee handbooks to employment applications and the application for admission. These changes are a victory for queer activists on campus. Explicit protections in writing for students on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity are an absolute necessity and a moral imperative in a time of a national political climate which aims at marginalizing sexual and gender-derived diversity. It is important for any institution to clearly define their stance on queer issues and I am pleased that changes are being implemented. This could not have happened without the support of President Randy Helm, the college administration, the Muhlenberg Gay Straight Alliance and the PA Diversity Network.

Note: The Muhlenberg Non-discrimination policy can now be viewed at the college's web site. It reads: Muhlenberg College does not discriminate against any person based on age, color,disability, gender, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation,veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, state or local laws.

Businesses that have VGPs for hand-out distribution:
Diamonz Nightclub --1913 W. Broad St., Bethlehem
Stonewall Bar -- 28-30 N. 10th St., Allentown
Candida's -- 247 N. 12th St., Allentown
Hava Java Coffee Shop -- N. 19th St. Allentown
Fountainhead Book& Gifts-- 641 Penn Ave., West Reading

- Monthly Direct Mail Distribution
Currently the Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance (PA-GALA) mails the Valley Gay Press to its members.To become a member of PA-GALA, send $25 for an individual membership or $35 for a family membership to: PA-GALA PO Box 20825 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

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HOT NEWS

HAVEN YOUTH GROUP

HAVEN MEETINGS : every Wednesday from 7:00 - 9:00PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem. Meetings are open to GLBTAQ youth ages 14 - 20. For information: havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com or 610-868-2153.HAVEN needs facilitators. Facilitator training provided.

PFLAG NEWS

PFLAG - Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, www.eastern-pa-pflag.org. e-mail:info@eastern-pa-pflag.org. Meeting locations: LV - 1st Tues., 1st Pres. Church, Allentown. 610-967-5219. Reading - 3rd Tues., Unitarian Universalist Church, Reading. 610-967-5219. Monroe - 1st Wed., Eastern Monroe Public Library, Stroudsburg. 570-620-123 .Meeting Dates: **Allentown:** December 6, January 3, February 7. **Monroe:** December 7, January 4, February 1. **Reading:** No meeting in December, January 17, February 21.

ACCO CONCERT

A Chorus Celebrating Women (ACCO) will hold its 14th Annual Winter Solstice Concert on December 21 at 7:30 pm at Christ Lutheran Church, 13th and Hamilton in Allentown. Admission : $12 for adults , $6 for students. Please call 610-252-3470 for information and tickets.

STEVIE Z

Fridays - Dec. 2 & 23 - Stevie performs piano music at the MooseLounge in Allentown from 9PM-Midnite. No cover charge on Friday nites. 1/2 of Stevie's tips will go to Katrina relief. Stevie will play the grand at the annual Snowball on December 4 - at Allentown's Crowne Plaza Hotel beginning at 5PM. Contact FACT at www.factlv.org for more info. Stevie will also play at MCCLV - Dec. 11 and at the Christmas Day Evening Service.

FAIR MARKET AT UUCLV

On December 4 and 11, the Social Action Committtee of UUCLV will hold a Fair Trade Market featuring items from 10,000 Villages and Market Place India. Items for sale were created by Third World artisans around the world and provide fair income to the artisans, their families and villages.

A great chance to find unique, beautiful, handmade, affordable, and sweatshop-free gifts for family and friends. UUCLV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem, Market will start after service, at approximately 11:30 am. For more info, contact UUCLV.

GLOSS EVENTS

The Gay & Lesbian Organized Sports Society (GLOSS) holds frequent get togethers. Racquetball is Tuesday and Saturday evenings at the Allentown Racquet club.

On a monthly basis, GLOSS offers bowling, pinochle, and game night. Bowling is held the second Friday of the month at the Rose Bowl in Allentown at 8:45PM. Pinochle is the first Saturday of the month and game night is usually on the third Saturday.

GLOSS has an email newsletter that will keep you updated on all their events. To sign up for the newsletter go to the website. GLOSS is always looking for people willing to be activity leaders. If your favorite activity is not listed, they will help you organize an event or outing by promoting it in the newsletter and website. Contact GLOSS: Info@gloss.org; web: www.gloss.org; or US Mail: PO Box 21862, Lehigh Valley, PA 18002.

GAYDAR!!!

Gaydar Magazine's Fall/Holiday issue is on newsstands now. With Melissa Etheridge and Margaret Cho exclusives, lighthearted news and pictures, and in depth articles on gay depression, crystal meth and same gender domestic abuse, this issue is the strongest yet. Don't miss the current Gaydar at a newsstand near you. Check out that poster centerfold of Melissa!

MUHLENBERG PLAYS

Nov. 30 through Dec. 4, 2005, Muhlenberg Theater Assoc. will present five original short plays staged in repertoire with Jim Grimsley's A Bird Of Prey in the Studio Theatre, Trexler Pavilion.For times and Ticket information call 484-664-3333 or purchase online at www.muhlenberg .edu/tickets.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OPEN AND AFFIRMING

After publicly reading through an "Open and Affirming" statement that includes sexual orientation, St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Allentown's congregation passed the statement unanimously, making this the first UCC church, not just in the Lehigh Valley, but in the entire state of Pennsylvania to adopt a statement as "Open and Affirming." Also, Steve Ziminsky was elected a Deacon of the Church in the congregational meeting.

MCC EVENTS

Metropolitan Community Church events include:

December 4, MCCLV Observes World AIDS Day, 10:30 am and 6:00 pm MCCLV Sanctuary.

December 11, I.C.E. Christmas Concert, In Christ Eternally includes pianist and vocalist Tanya Erdman, vocalists Marjorie Fortin and David Fortin, 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 pm, MCCLV Sanctuary.

Coffee & Short Stories - Last Friday of every month, 7pm at the church.

Coming in January - Drag Show - date TBA - Drag Queens and Drag Kings are invited to participate!! Please contact Stephanie for more information: fellowship.ministry@mcclvorg or 610-709-8800.

MCCLV's dates for the 2006 National Freedom to Marry Day events: Friday, February 10, will be the Courthouse Action and Saturday, February 11 at 7 p.m. will be the NFTMD Ceremony and Dance.

PA DIVERSITY

PA Diversity's Holiday Art & Craft Show's opening reception provided an opportunity to meet seven local artists whose work was displayed throughout the weekend event, listen to non-stop entertainment by jazz legend Roberta Meek and rave about great hors d'oeurves prepared by Patricia Sullivan. Over 75 people attended the opening and dozens more visited the gallery over the weekend to view and purchase the fascinating art work.

Nationally known wire artist Karl Howard (www.karlhoward.com) donated his sculpture "Two Spoonfuls" for the raffle. It was won by Janet Glassman. The three day event supported the arts, brought community groups together, encouraged participation by local allies and the proceeds from entire event benefit the Valley Gay Press, the GLBT Infoline, PA Diversity's Resource Web Site and other PA Diversity programs.

PA Diversity will be making the Art and Craft Show an annual event.

During the month of November, PA Diversity did presentations for the Berks County GSA and at Freedom High School GSA in Bethlehem.

The GLBT Infoline continues to receive an increasing number of calls. Check out PA Diversity's Resource Web Site for new listings.

Don't forget that the next Valley Gay Press will be a Jan-Feb combined issue, so be sure to submit information for your January & February events by Dec. 21.

CALENDAR

Am Haskalah, Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, Services at Allentown JCC at 22nd and Tilghman Streets, http://www.jrf.org/amhaskpa,610-435-3775
ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women,
AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK-see **FACT**
ASC-AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
All Together Now - Supportive Ecumenical Christians, 610-398-1286, bluemountain@entermail.net
BGMSG - Berk's County Gay Men's Social Group -- singles and couples social events berksgmsg@aol.com
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
CHICOMAX.com- Informational website
CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <.civictheater,com>
CUUPS -- Covenenat of Unitarian Universalist Pagans every 4th Sunday at noon at the UUCLV. uuclv_cuups@yahoogroups.com.
Enigma Players -- qacres@prolog.net
equal@agere- email: equal@agere.com
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
Gaydar Magazine-- www.gaydar.com
GLEE at Air Products
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, <vagranthollow.com/GLISN/>
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown www.glora.1colony.com, glora@dejazzed.com
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, www.gloss.org Info@gloss.org
GLOW- at PPL
HAVEN GLBT Youth Group of the UUC LV - call: 610-868-2153, email: havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com
HMFF-Hope Ministry Family Fellowship, Sundays, 11 am, Open Space Gallery, 931 Hamilton St. 610-791-0716
Integrity- Lesbian & Gay Episcopalians Family & Friends meets quarterly. 610-758-8642 gamba.guy@verizon.net"
Infoline - Greater LV GLBT Infoline: 610-HELP123 (435-7123) M-F 6pm -9pm Office: 610-432-5449 info@padiversity.org
INTERWEAVE -- GLBTAI group at the UUCLV. 3rd Sundays.. Interweave_UUCLV@yahoo groups..com. www.uuclvpa.org 610-866-7652.
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, email:info@lvmgc.org,<www.lvgmc.org> 610-366-3320, rehearsals: Tues.-Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem
Lehigh Valley Transsexual Coalition- 610-610-997-0976, humanrights4all@aol.com, 610-814-0530 JamesHalleman@aol.com
MCC - Metropolitian Community Church, Merchants Square Mall, 1901 S. 12th Street, Allentown Services: 10:30am & 6pm, mcclehighvalley@ yahoo.com, http://www.mcclv.org 610-709-8800
NCC- Northampton Community College GLB Student Union, 610.861.5541(#1386) or 882-2531
19th St & Civic Theatre - 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
PA-Diversity Network- 610-432-5449 www.padiversity.org PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002
PA-GALA - Pennsylvania Gay And Lesbian Alliance, (Candidate Guide, & Political Lobbying) P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610-863-0227 www.pa-gala.org
PARENTS- GLBT parent's group: 610-262-2519

DECEMBER 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Muhlenberg New Visions Through Dec 4th		Voices and	1 PA-GALA RAA GLOSS Open Mic	2 Stevie Z TO	3 Names Quilt WDIY GLOSS
4 MCC -AIDS Day UUCLV Fact Market Snow Ball	5 Reckless - Fair@TO 2-17	6 GLOSS LVGMC LV PFLAG	7 HAVEN M PFLAG	8 Reckless - @TO 2-17 RAA GLOSS	9	10 WDIY GLOSS LVGMC BCMG
11 GLOSS MCC Concert WDIY UCLV Fair Market	12 RAA	13 GLOSS LVGMC	14 HAVEN Reckless - @TO 2-17	15 GLOSS RAA P PFLAG	16 Reckless - @TO 2-17	17 GLOSS WDIY MCC GLORA Christmas Dance
18 GLOSS MCC HMFF WDIY UUCLV	19 RAA	20 GLOSS LVGMC	21 HAVEN ACCO	22 RAA GLOSS	23 Stevie Z	24 WDIY WDIY GLOSS MCC Christmas Eve
25 MCC Christmas UUCLV	26 RAA	27 GLOSS LVGMC	28 HAVEN	29 RAA GLOSS	30 MCC Coffee& Stories	31

JANUARY 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 HMFF UUCLV WDIY MCC	2 RAA	3 LVGMC GLOSS LV PFLAG	4 HAVEN M PFLAG	5 GLOSS PA-GALA RAA	6	7 GLOSS WDIY
8 HMFF UUCLV WDIY MCC	9	10 LVGMC	11 HAVEN	12 GLOSS RAA	13	14 WDIY GLOSS
15 UUCLV MCC HMFF WDIY	16	17 GLOSS R PFLAG LVGMC	18 HAVEN	19 RAA GLOSS P PFLAG	20	21 WDIY GLOSS
22 MCC WDIY UUCLV	23 RAA	24 GLOSS LVGMC	25 HAVEN	26 GLOSS RAA	27 MCC Coffee& Stories	28 WDIY GLOSS
29 HMFF MCC UUCLV WDIY	30 RAA	31 LVGMC GLOSS	HAVEN	RAA GLOSS		WDIY GLOSS

FEBRUARY 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 M PFLAG HAVEN	2 GLOSS RAA PA-GALA	3	4 GLOSS WDIY Stevie Z
5 HMFF UUCLV WDIY	6 RAA	7 GLOSS LVGMC LV PFLAG	8 HAVEN	9 RAA GLOSS	10 MCC FTMD Court House	11 GLOSS MCC FTMD Cer. & Danc WDIY
12 MCC WDIY HMFF UUCLV	13 RAA	14 GLOSS LVGMC	15 HAVEN	16 RAA GLOSS P PFLAG	17	18 WDIY GLOSS
19 HMFF MCC WDIY UUCLV	20 RAA	21 GLOSS LVGMC R PFLAG	22 HAVEN	23 GLOSS RAA	24 MCC Coffee& Stories	25 WDIY GLOSS
26 WDIY UUCLV CUUPS HMFF MCC Potluck	27 RAA	28 GLOSS LVGMC				

PFLAG - LV Parents Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 1st Tues. 1st Pres. Church Allentown 610.967.5219 www.eastern-pa-pflag.org
Pride - Pride of the Greater Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <info@prideglv.org>, <www.pridelv.org>
QuEST - Student group at Lafayette College ,
Quakers-Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting-Route 512 1/2 mi. North of Rte 22 Bethlehem, PA. Worship at 9:30 am. (610)691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs. At 16th and Turner.
Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., Meets at MCCLV renlv.org
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG- 610-967-5219
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.5973
Temple Sophia, Interfaith Sanctuary 117 E Ridge St., Coaldale 18218 570-657-6447 Pastor: Rt. Rev. Tom Cormier
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-, Allentown, 610-820-9270.
Unity-26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church LV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VGP - Valley Gay Press, 610.432.5449, VGP@padiversity.org VGP PO Box 22902 Lehigh Valley PA 18002 www.padiversity.org
Wachovia-GALEA- Gay and Lesbian Employee Association. Contact GALEA@Wachovia.com
WDIY - WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Sat. 6:00 pm This Way Out, Assorted Women 6:30 pm. 8100.88.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

LVGMC REHEARSALS - TUESDAYS
LV PFLAG - 1ST TUESDAYS
READING - PFLAG 3RD TUES
GLOSS RACQUETBALL-TUES & SATS
HAVEN - WEDNESDAYS
MONROE PFLAG - 1ST WEDS
PA-GALA - 1ST THURSDAYS
POTTSVILLE PFLAG - 3RD THURSDAYS
POETRY CIRCLE - FRIDAYS
GLOSS BOWLING - 2ND FRI
COFFEE & STORIES - LAST FRI
GLOSS PINOCHLE - 1ST SATS
GLOSS GAME NIGHTS - 3RD SATS
AL-ANON - SATS
INTERWEAVE - 3RD SUNDAYS

DEC 1-4 MUHLENBERG PLAYS
DEC 1 -OUT SPOKEN OPEN MIC
DEC 2-17 -"RECKLESS" @ TO
DEC 2 - STEVIEZ
DEC 3 - NAMES QUILT MCCLV
DEC 4 - FACT SNOWBALL
DEC 4 - MCCLV WORLD AIDS DAY
DEC 4 - FAIR MARKET UUCLV
DEC 6 - LV-PFLAG
DEC 7 - MONROE PFLAG
DEC 10 - BCMG FUNDRAISER
DEC 10 - LVGMC @ MOOSELOUNGE
DEC 11 - FAIR MARKET UUCLV
DEC 11 - MCCLV I.C.E. CONCERT
DEC 15 - POTTSVILLE PFLAG
DEC 17 - MCCLV DANCE
DEC 17 -GLORA ANNIV DINNER
DEC 21 - ACCO WINTER SOLSTICE CONCERT
DEC 23 - STEVIEZ
DEC 24 - MCCLV CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
DEC 25 - MCCLV CHRISTMAS SERVICES
JAN 3 - LV PFLAG
JAN 4 - MONROE PFLAG
JAN 17 - READING PFLAG
FEB 10 - MCC FTMD
FEB 11 - MCC FTMD CEREMONY & DANCE

INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE!
TO POST INFO: 610-432-5449
VGP@PADIVERSITY.ORG

LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS

by Liz Bradbury

The election news was pretty good, pretty darn good. It is important to note that local elections all over the country seem to indicate a national dissatisfaction with the way (anti-gay) conservative elected officials are leading the country. Here in the Lehigh Valley, Democrats won most of the contests.

In the County Executive race, Don Cunningham trampled Jane Ervin. The vote was 3 to 2 for Cunningham, which is a huge margin considering there are far more Republicans in Lehigh County. I have said all along that Ervin has been supportive of the GLBT community, and I am thankful for all she has done, but she cannot escape the fact that she sent support letters for Rick "Gay marriage would result in man-dog sex" Santorum around the county. Perhaps this was as much a general indictment of Republican leadership as anti-tax increase sentiment.

Let's hope that Cunningham will follow through on his campaign statement that he will work to pass an anti-discrimination policy in the entire County. Let's also hope that he will reverse his stand on Domestic Partner benefits and support them for the same-sex partners of County employees. Let's hope that Cunningham will come to a Pride Festival and speak in favor of our rights from the stage, Jane Ervin did that on many occasions, even in the years she was not running a campaign, let's hope Cunningham will do that too.

The Pawlowski-Hedyt mayoral race in Allentown resulted in a clear mandate for Ed Pawlowski. Ed won every precinct, even the one where Heydt lives. Really quite a feat. Pawlowski was by far the more pro-GLBT civil rights candidate.

A Democratic sweep of all Allentown City Council seats was frankly a mouth dropping surprise. Mike D'Amore, in his public acceptance speech, thanked PA-GALA for help in winning his race. Julio Guridy and David Howells Sr. who strongly supported Allentown's anti-discrimination ordinance, retained their seats.

Other highlights included: supportive candidate Karen Dolan winning a seat on Bethlehem City Council, supportive candidate John Stoffa in a surprise win for Northampton County Executive. Charles Dertinger's win for Northampton County Council, and several pro-GLBT incumbents retaining their seats. See more on national GLBT wins in What's That About on page 2.

MCC CALL FOR ARTISTS

MCCLV is seeking all artists working in many disciplines, including: writing, dance, music, illustration, crafts & fine art for integral planning of upcoming events. Contact: Jennifer Green, 610-432-7563

RANTS & RAVES BY STEPHEN T. LIBBY

BEST SECULAR HOLIDAY SONGS OF ALL TIME THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE (IN MY HUMBLE OPINION)

1. The Hannakah Song by Adam Sandler (I dare you not to laugh.) 2. Frosty the Snowman by Jimmy Durante (I dare you not to cry when Frosty melts.) 3. Christmastime is Here by The Peanuts Gang (Linus is a religion unto himself) 4. Have a Holly Jolly Christmas by Burl Ives (Somebody waits for you, kiss HIM once for me.) 5. It's Beginning to Look Alot LIke Christmas by Ethel Merman (Many have tried, none better.) 6. Santa Baby by Eartha Kitt (Sorry Madonna fans, this is purrr-fection) 7. Step Into Christmas by Elton John (Have you seen the video? How many drugs was he on?!) 8. All I Want For Christmas is You by Mariah Carey (She's not my favorite, but LOVE the song.) 9. The Most Offensive Song Ever by the South Park Gang (After the millionth time of trying to decifer the lyrics, check them out online. Perfect for grandma.) 10. There's No Place Like Home For the Holidays by The Carpenters (Beats the hell out of Merry Christmas Darling.) 11. A Jew on Christmas by the South Park Gang (If we must have a slow song, let it be this one.) 12. Santa Claus is Coming to Town by The Jackson 5 (I like to picture them performing this in a manger.) 13. A Wonderful Christmastime by Paul McCartney (Isn't it though.) 14. Silver Bells by Doris Day (Sometimes music and singer are so perfect it would be futile to poke fun.) 15. It's Christmas, Baby Please Come Home by U2 (Unless you forgot my gift.) 16. Please Come Home For Christmas by the Eagles (Again, unless you forgot my gift. Get thee to a Tiffany's.) 17. You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch by Boris Karloff* (That baritone scared the shit out of me as a kid. Now I think it's kinda sexy.) 18. Someday at Christmas by Stevie Wonder (Word to the Bush.) 19. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree by Brenda Lee (How the helll did she rock around a Christmas tree? She's no bigger than an ornament.) 20. Baby, It's Cold Outside by Ann-Margret & Al Hirt (Just try NOT to pretend you're Ann-Margret while singing along!)

You're list may differ...and, therefore, it would be wrong. Now, I am in no way condoning the illegal downloading of this list. Unless you have the means to do so. Otherwise purchase the songs individually (yeah, right) and make your own mixed disc to listen to while sweating over the holiday errands. It may help you get through that traffic jam on McArther Road or wave ALL your fingers at the jerk who just stole your parking space at Wegman's. Remember, it's not a cure all. If you already don't like fruit cake, it's probably not going to heighten that experience ...it does work on a nice thick polish sausage, though... What were talking about? **Oh, yes...Happy Holidays to all! Steve**

*Editor's Note: Dear Steve, it wasn't Boris Karloff singing Mr. Grinch, it was Thurl Ravenscroft. Don't ask me how I know that. LB.

PLANET Parenthood

by Earl and Donnie Snyder

donniearlucas@msn.com

The first two years with our son Lucas have given us a lot to talk about in this column. Other same-sex parents have shared their personal experiences with us. This communication helps us deal with day to day parenting issues and prepares us for what is to come. We recently had the opportunity to sit with our friend, Deb, who is a lesbian mom. Deb's partner Vanessa shares in the parenting responsibilities. We talked about how Deb's relationship with Vanessa may have impacted her children.

Deb's daughter Holly is a pre-teen and her son Russell is a young adult now. Deb and Vanessa are a very "out" couple, and are very proud of their family. They attend public and private events together with the children. They make no attempt to hide the fact that they are a lesbian couple and neither do their children. The children view both of them as mother figures and refer to them as such to their friends. All their friends know about them and so do their friends' parents.

Recently they hosted a sleepover for Holly. Holly's friends were all dropped off at the house by their parents who knew the children would be in good hands. Deb and Vanessa never tried to live anything but the truth with their children. From young ages the children have been aware that Deb and Vanessa love each other. The children respect that relationship. They have not been influenced negatively by any type of anti-gay peer pressures. The kids never tried to portray their family any differently than what it was. Deb has found her children to be growing up with open-minds and an acceptance of the myriad of sexual and gender identities. They understand what gay, lesbian and transgender mean.

Russ understood from a very young age what "gay" meant. But he and his friends had the bad habit of referring to things they didn't like as being "so gay." Fed up with this, Deb said simply, "That is not 'so gay', your mother is." This honest statement linked a loving face with the word gay.

Although Russ identifies himself as straight, he has had many discussions with his mom about sexual orientation, and has always been open to the possibilities of what his own sexuality could be. After all, his mom once identified herself as straight. While growing up Russ had the attitude that people must be accepting or they have no business being his friend. This air of acceptance allowed one of Russell's friends to come out to him. It is obvious the positive impact that being an out parent has on the children and on society in general.

This is just one example of the many families led by gay or lesbian parents. Each has a different story to tell and we hope to share more in the coming months.

On a related note, we were approached at church by lesbian parents, Diane and Jen, who are interested in starting a gay parenting group that would be open to any gay family and would possibly start in January. Any interested families can contact Diane and Jen at jlaroux2002@yahoo.com or us at our email address above.

OUTSPOKEN QUEER OPEN MIC SERIES

OUTspoken Queer Open Mic Series: Featuring Naomi Sommers, Singer/Songwriter from the Boston area, Thursday. December 1 at 8pm, Bethlehem Book Loft, 521 E. 4th St., Bethlehem, PA (610)691.1973 Suggested Donation: $3.00, to benefit AIDS Services Center, (in recognition of World AIDS Day). Sponsored by Lehigh University LGBTQA Programs &Outreach, Pride of the Greater Lehigh Valley, Bethlehem Book Loft & Spectrum.

SCOTT SAYS

By Scott Laubner

TALES OF THE CITY (OF NEW YORK)

Well, Country Mice and Chipmunk Readers, you know the first week I was here I was very homesick. I used to pass piles of garbage on the sidewalk that were waiting to be hauled away. Knowing the debris was probably headed for some landfill in Pennsylvania, I couldn't help feeling a little bit envious.

But, now I'm used to this big, crazy, sometimes annoying, sometimes wonderful town. It has proven to be harder than I thought I to find a suitable apartment. I should probably stop going out to the bars so much and hunker down. But...there is this bar that hosts an event called Musical Mondays. Every Monday night they show clips from movie musicals and Broadway productions on giant TV screens. The bar has two floors. Down in the basement there is a bartender and most nights he is wearing something very revealing. Last Monday he was wearing something I can only describe as fish net stockings for men (and no underpants.) I parked myself right in front of him and ordered an $8.50 seven and seven. I turned my attention to the TV and watched one showstopper after another. Songs from Into the Woods, Spamalot, Kiss of the Spider Woman, Chicago, Big River, Little Shop of Horrors etc. A clip from A Chorus Line flashed on the big screen, the opening audition number. Two bar patrons are standing in front of the monitors dancing completely in synch with what is happening on the screen. I thought, spirits, show tunes, and a buff bartender, what more do I need?

A guy from Queens sits down next to me and starts a conversation. He oblivously has been here before and half jokingly yells at the cluster of shirtless bartenders, "Are there any gay bartenders here tonight?" They ignore him. He inquires again... "I said are there any gay bartenders here tonight?" The one in the netting pants sarcastically says, "Look at this guy trying to blow our cover." Some voice behind me says, "Spaghetti is straight too, until you boil it."

I redirect my attention to the TV monitors. It's Streisand in Funny Girl. She's singing "Don't Rain on My Parade." In her orange dress she is on a train from Baltimore to New York, trying to catch up with Nicky Arnstein. But when she gets to the dock, the boat has left without her and now she has to hustle. Imagine a bar full of gays yelling up at the TV, "RUN BARBRA RUN!" Anyway I've got to wrap this up. Today I found a cockroach had set up housekeeping on my toothbrush, so I have got to get to Duane Reade.

Sincerely, City Mouse

"RECKLESS" @ THEATRE OUTLET

Theatre Outlet will present *Reckless* by Craig Lucas, December 2-17, at Silkwerks, 930 North 4th St in Allentown.

--Christmas Eve. Rachel's son has 'fired' her. Her husband has put out a contract on her life. She runs for it by leaving through the garage window. *Reckless* is an over-the-edge comedy following one woman along a bizarre, fantastical journey to find 'home.'--

Directed by Jill Harrison, with Lighting Design by Bartholomew Freed, and Set Design by Gino Ng, the cast includes Alana Gerlach (Rachel), David Schappert (Tom), Dan Coppinger (Lloyd), Ruth Darcy (Pooty), Mercedes Tonne (Trish), Tim Gross, and Michelle Horman.

For information see: theatreoutlet.org. Ticket reservations call: 610-820-9440.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG

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LIZ OUT LOUD©

By Liz Bradbury

TWO THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Lately, Trish and I have been doing quite a few presentations on GLBT issues at colleges and community organizations. We emphasize that "Pride means believing you deserve equal rights." It's something we all have to remind ourselves every day. Here are two issues that have come up frequently in our discussions with young GLBT people:

#1 The statement "I hate the sin, but love the sinner," is not a nice thing to say. It's always uttered as an indisputable truism. It's always shrouded in religious piety. But honestly, it's an insult no one should have to endure. It morally judges you and labels you a bad person worthy only of patronizing "love" stemming from pity.

How dare someone suggest that just because you are a minority member (whether based on race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity), you are a sinner. Why does this person get to define what sin is, and then label you? Don't fall for it. Sin is something that hurts someone not a condition of a loving heart. We are not sinners because we love someone of the same sex. Love is not a sin, you are not a sinner.

#2 It's time for us all to understand that employers who refuse to give same-sex domestic partnership benefits, when they provide spousal benefits to other employees, are doing so solely based on discrimination against gay families. It is not a financial issue, because the budgetary presumption of spousal benefits applies to every employee. After all, if a gay employee leaves, 9 out of 10 times the new employee will be straight and will use the spousal benefits and probably benefits for children as well. Your family is not any more expensive than anyone else's.

The argument that "the company only gives the benefits to married couples" is an excuse not a reason. A long term committed same-sex couple can go to Canada and make a legal commitment in the same-way that an opposite sex couple can. If the issue is the legal long-term commitment, then the company should recognize Canadian marriage for same-sex couples the way they recognize opposite sex marriage, even though the US government does not recognize it.

Equal benefits make for more loyal and productive employees. The only reason to deny a minority group equality, whether it is health benefits or legal protections, or marriage rights, is discrimination. We must see this situation for what it is, an issue of civil rights. We must demand workplace equality and not let baseless arguments deter us.

NAMES QUILT DISPLAY AT MCC

Saturday December 3,10 AM to 4 PM and Sunday Dec. 4 during church services, part of the Names Project Quilt will be on display at the Metropolitan Community Church LV, In remembrance of AIDS World Day.

BERKS COUNTY GAY MEN S GROUP

Great events in December include: The second annoual Christmas Dinner; comedian Bob Smith -fundraiser for Young Gay America; and a dance on Dec. 10. Contact: berksgmsg@aol.com.

GLBT AL-ANON AT MCCLV

GLBT Al-Anon Meeting at 12 Noon, every Saturday at MCC. For information, call Chris: 484-767-3951 or Terry: 610-547-1125. Al-Anon Family Groups are relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength and hope.

TRISH'S COLUMN©

MORE ON LOCAL COMPANIES

By Patricia Sullivan

We are very proud that Allentown protects its citizens based upon sexual orientation and gender identity, but what if you don't work in Allentown? Does your business protect your rights? Does it really make a difference if you work in Allentown?

The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC) website ranks the 146 largest employers in the Lehigh Valley. To identify the protections offered by each company I used other websites: the individualcompany's, the Human Rights Campaign's and the Equality Forum of Philadelphia's.

Of the top ten employers, five have protections based on sexual orientation: St. Luke's Hospital (ranked #2 based on the number of employees), Air Products #3, PPL #5, Manpower, Inc. #7 and the Pennsylvania State Government #10. Only Air Products includes protection for gender identity and none of the top ten employers offer same-sex domestic partner benefits. The 5 top companies with no protections or benefits at all are: Lehigh Valley Hospital #1, the U.S. Government #4 (military personnel are not protected, nonmilitary policy has wavered under GWB), Giant #6, Lehigh County Government #8 and Mack Truck #9.

Which of all the 146 companies on LVEDC's website provide the most comprehensive protection for gay, lesbian and transgender employees? Here's what I was able to find out:

Companies that provide protection for sexual orientation, gender identity and offer benefits to same-sex domestic partners: Agere #15, Lehigh University #21, Aetna #40, Walgreens #43, Kraft Foods #46, Muhlenberg College #68, Sears Roebuck & Co. #75 and Fleet Bank #90.

Companies that protect based on sexual orientation only (not gender Identity) and offer benefits to same-sex domestic partners: Northampton County Community College #33, The Morning Call #39, Dun & Bradstreet #42, The Hartford #48, Verizon #57, Lafayette College #58, Home Depot #60, Moravian College #78, Cigna Health Corporation #108, Cedar Crest College #117, United Parcel Service #119 and Coca Cola #127.

Companies that protect employees based on both sexual orientation and gender identity but do not give benefits: Air Products #3, Wachovia #34 and the City of Allentown #35.

Companies that protect based upon sexual orientation only: St. Luke's Hospital #2, PPL #5, Manpower Inc.#7, Allentown School District #13, Bethlehem Area School District #16, Walmart #18, Wegmans #22, KMart #51, Georgia Pacific Dixie Cup Div. #60 and Lehigh Carbon Community College #61.

It was difficult to ferret out this information, so I must credit the companies who put their non-discrimination policies prominently on their websites. In the past I have tried calling companies, but they are extremely reluctant to answer questions about policies over the phone. I was unable to verify employment protections offered by the remaining 116 businesses on the list and it seems illogical that some of the business listed did not have these policies. For example, Orasure the company that produces the 20 minute AIDS test, does not have employment protection for its GLBT employees. Perhaps it is an oversight, or no one has asked them to add these protections to their policy. If your company has non-discrimination protections and I did not list it, please email me a copy of the policy (Liztrish@aol.com).

Allentown is the only municipality in the Lehigh Valley with a non-discrimination law. Any Allentown business with over 5 employees must comply with that law unless they are a religious or fraternal organization. Yes, it does make a difference if you work in Allentown.

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS PERFORMANCE

LVGMC will be singing at the Moose Lounge on December 10 at 9 pm above the Stonewall, 28 N. 10th Street, Allentown.

POP QUIZ 8

1. He played the title role in "A Man Called Horse," his name is_____ and he played _____ in the first two Harry Potter movies.

2. She played the title role in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie." Her name is___ and she played _____ in all four Harry Potter movies.

3. She played Elinor Dashwood in Sense and Sensibility and Miss Kenton in The Remains of the Day, her name is_____ and she played _____ in the third Harry Potter movie.

4. He played Q in several James Bond movies and was part of Monty Python, his name is_____ and he played _____ in two of the Harry Potter movies.

5. She played Jude in the Crying Game and Queen Elizabeth I in the Black Adder TV series, her name is _____ and she played _____ in the fourth H.P. movie.

6. She played Laura in Dr. Zhivago, her name is ____ and she played _____ in the third H.P. movie.

7. He played Rasputin and the Sheriff of Nottingham, his name is ___ and he played ____in all four Harry Potter movies.

8. He has played Falstaff and Tweedledum, and he played Matsui in Ocean's 12, his name is ___ and he played ____in all four Harry Potter movies.

9. He played Dr. Smith in the remake of Lost in Space and Jim Gordon in Batman Begins, his name is ___ and he played _____in the third.and fourth Harry Potter movies.

10. He played the title role in the English Patient, his name is _____ and he played _____ in the fourth H.P. movie.

1. Richard Harris, Albus Dumbledore 2. Dame Maggie Smith, Professor Minerva McGonagall 3. Emma Thompson, Professor Sybil Trelawney 4. John Cleese, Nearly Headless Nick 5. Miranda Richardson Rita Skeeter 6. Julie Christie, Madam Rosmerta 7. Alan Rickman, Severus Snape 8. Robbie Coltrane, Rubeus Hagrid 9. Gary Oldman, Sirius Black 10. Ralph Fiennes, Voldemort

A GOOD READ -- BOOK REVIEW

(A new feature by VGP Staff)

Two cartoon anthologies by Jeff Krell, "Jayson, Best of the 80s" and "Jayson, Best of the 90s," have just come out for Christmas. You may remember the Jayson series which started in the PGN and was featured in Gay Comix and Meatmen.

Jeff Krell's drawings have the visual gesture of vintage "Archie," with the crispness of "Tin Tin." The stories that follow Jayson and his friends, Arena Stage and Robyn Ricketts through big city adventures in Philly, to Jayson's narrow-minded hometown "Farmville," to a promiscuous outer space stop over, amuse and engage. If you're looking for a "mature audience" stocking stuffer that's both naughty and nice, check out Jeff Krell's Jayson. ($9.95 at Amazon, bookstores and ignite-ent.com.)

We believe it would improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley if all people were equally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin,ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability or use of a guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA Diversity Network

GLBT Infoline

PA-GALA

Valley Gay Press

Allentown Human Relations Commission

Safe-Space of Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the GLV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

NCC GLBT Student Union

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Agere

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere - Cedar Crest

9th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT

AIDS Outreach

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Services Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity - Bethlehem

The Lehigh Valley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic Committee

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

Puerto Rican Cultural Alliance

Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley

Muhlenberg Theater Association

Crime Victims Council of the Lehigh Valley

Touchstone Theater

Congregation Am Haskalah

To add your organization to this list, Contact VGP

QUOTE #1

"A guy who shot at us moons ago, is making homemade candy and goulash to feed our volunteers." **-- Out lesbian Andie Gibbs of Camp Sister Space in Ovett, Miss. (which, since Katrina, has distributed over 2 million pounds of food to their largely conservative neighbors) on the change in attitude locals have had since the disaster, regarding the lesbian retreat.**

QUOTE #2

"...(R)eligious right leaders believe, unless you attend my church, accept my God and study my sacred text, you cannot be a moral person." **-- Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, blasting conservative religious activists, calling them "zealots" who claim a "monopoly on God" while promoting anti-gay policies akin to Adolf Hitler's.**

QUOTE #3

"I don't want (parents) to go to their daughters and say, 'Honey, she cannot be your role model anymore.' I want them to say, "You see what that woman is doing? She's strong, she's powerful, and she is who she is. And you can be OK with that." **-- Basketball superstar Sheryl Swoopes after she came out as a lesbian in an ESPN interview.**

QUOTE #4

"It's really kind of uncool to be anti-gay," **-- School Psychologist Jennifer Zacharski, on the school support that elected out lesbian student Jen Wohlner and out gay student Ryan Cooperman Homecoming King and Queen at Buffalo High School in Chicago.**

QUOTE #5

"We have a right to talk about our faith wherever we would like to talk about it, but we have no right to demand that everyone or anyone subscribe to our particular religious point of view." **-- MCCLV Pastor Elizabeth Goudy from a recent sermon.**

Distelfink ©by Ruby Zebu "Low tech, but still gay" 12/05

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in Valley Gay Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VGP makes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.

CHECK OUT PA DIVERSITY NETWORK'S WEBSITE AT WWW.PADIVERSITY.ORG